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Volume 21

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Number 9

SQUIRREL HUNTING ON STATE-OWNED AREAS



Jack Kirstein Photo.

Many people are missing the fine squirrel hunting on our state-owned areas.

28,000 Free Acres!

Denny Rehder

When a fellow talks of squirrel hunting, he's speaking of a sport that carries the weight of nostalgia with it. Ghosts of Daniel Boone and his trailblazers chuckle softly over their own squirrel hunts, while Junior gets that Christmas rifle ready for the coming season. Squirrel hunting is a relaxing sport usually followed by some fine here in Iowa. We have an abundance of squirrels that seem to be affected by hunting pressure. But, squirrel hunting loses its ease and its relaxing atmosphere when you spend all morning trying to find a place to hunt. The helter-skelter dash over the countryside in the quest of squirrels is unnecessary at all. Do you know that there are over 28,000 acres of squirrel timber in this state that see very few hunters during the season? Surprising? Maybe not, until you find out that access to these acres is free and public. That's right, you don't have to ask permission to hunt, because it's your own land. Are these names familiar? Mt. Ayr Game Area, Browns Slough, Eldon Game Area, LeHart Area, Stephens Forest, Shimek Forest, and Yellow River Forest? They should be. They're a few of the state-owned areas open to public hunting. If you're a squirrel hunter, you're using our state-owned areas for squirrel hunting. One south Iowa area reported that no more than twenty squirrel hunt-

ers took advantage of the 500 acres of good squirrel timber. Five hundred acres will support a pile of squirrels and some hunter is missing a good bet not making these areas a part of his hunting season.

Expectations are for an average hunting season for squirrels in Iowa. Our average season is good, but the unharvested plenty in some of these public areas is a shame. The fellow who stays home because he can't bear the thought of driving all day to find a place to hunt is missing out on some fine hours of relaxation.

The squirrel season comes at the best time of the year for most of us. Just getting out among the autumn colors on one of those warm, hazy days when the world seems to drag its feet toward the approaching winter offers a lot of satisfaction. Stretch out under a tree with your call and scare up a bushytail. If you go home empty-handed, who cares? There's always another day and that's a good excuse to go again.

You can have an enjoyable squirrel season this fall, without all the rush if you head for your nearest public area. They're all over the state and when the leaves have fallen and the mosquitos are gone what better way to spend a day?

If you don't already have one, write for the list of our public shooting areas. This list tells location, acreage, and a description of the area as well as the species offering good hunting there. Add up the acreage of squirrel timber and you'll find those 28,000 acres crying for you—the squirrel hunter.

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CIRCULATION THIS ISSUE 52,000

COMMISSION MINUTES**General**

Travel was authorized for five commissioners and five staff to attend the International Association of Game, Fish and Conservation Commissioners at Jackson Hole, Wyoming, September 12-14.

Three men were authorized to transport the Wildlife Exhibit to the International Association of Game, Fish and Conservation Commissioners at Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

One man was authorized to attend the American Institute of Park Executives at Kansas City, September 24-28.

Three men were authorized to attend the National Conference on State Parks at Zion, Illinois, September 30 to October 5.

Travel was authorized for two men to attend the Conservation Business Management Association meeting in Toronto, Canada, in September.

Travel was authorized for one man to attend the Regional State Nurserymen's Association meeting at Zanesville, Ohio, August 21-23.

One man was authorized to attend the Federal Aid Coordinators meeting at Milford, Michigan, September 17-21.

The Conservation Officers Preliminary Exam was set for August 20.

Fish and Game

A license was approved for Iowa Power and Light Company to provide electric service to Wilson Island, Pottawattamie County.

No action was taken on the use of muzzle loader guns during the shotgun deer season.

Approval was given for the acquisition of 120 acres at \$25,000 and 80 acres at \$29,000 on the Otter Creek Marsh.

The purchase of 15 acres at the northeast corner of East Okoboji for \$150 was approved.

The hunting seasons for squirrel, rabbit, raccoon, and deer as well as the trapping seasons were approved.

County Conservation

Appanoose County was given approval for the purchase of 20

acres at \$125 an acre as an addition to Lelah Bradley Park.

Butler County received approval for a management agreement between the city of Parkersburg and the County Conservation Board for part of Beaver Meadows Park.

Cerro Gordo County received approval for the acquisition of 4.3 acres at \$150 an acre as an addition to Rock Falls Park.

Fremont County received approval for the acquisition by transfer of 44.36 acres for the County Farm and the purchase of 35.6 acres at \$246 an acre for a recreation area.

Jackson County received approval for the acquisition of the Red Schoolhouse near Maquoketa as an historic site. Acquisition would be by lease without cost.

Jackson County also received approval for the acquisition of the Fowler Schoolhouse site near Maquoketa for \$100 to be used as a game cover area.

Polk County received approval for the acquisition of seven parcels of land and conditional approval for the acquisition of another parcel of land, the whole comprising 223.98 acres at a total cost of \$66,015. These lands are part of the Yeader Creek Park project.

A development plan for Diamond Lake in Poweshiek County was approved.

A management plan for the Beaman Arboretum in Grundy County was approved.

A 25-year agreement for the maintenance and management of Frank A. Gotch State Park with Humboldt County was approved subject to final approval of the Executive Council.

Lands and Waters

Approval was given for one road access at Provost Point on Blackhawk Lake in Sac County.

Action on the use of a seaplane at Green Valley Lake in Union County was postponed pending completion of a study by the State Aeronautics Commission.

A request to alter a construction permit for a telephone cable at the Twin Hills Beach Development on East Okoboji was approved.

A permit for the installation of a transmission line along the south boundary of Margo Frankel Woods in Polk County was approved.

An exchange of road right-of-way lands with Webster County near Dolliver State Park was approved.

A report was given concerning proposed acquisition and development at the Lucas Area of Stephens State Forest in Lucas County.

Approval was given to proceed with letting a contract for the repair of a spillway wall at Lake Darling.

An Administrative Order on boat numbering was approved.

Who's to Blame?**... MR. AVERAGE DUCK HUNTER****... That's Who****Dr. James H. Shaeffer**

Many articles have been written discussing the reasons for the decline of duck populations in the past 15 years. Most of these papers were developed by professional conservationists and were read by people in the professional conservation field. These papers placed the blame for declining waterfowl in many cases—drainage of wetlands, drought, improper land management, oversized bag limits.

It is my observation, however, that the blame for this situation has never been placed on the shoulders of the people who deserve to be credited for declining waterfowl numbers. These people are the average American duck hunters.

Mr. Average Duck Hunter is a creature of unmistakable characteristics: for 10 months of the year, he is occupied in the chase of the mighty dollar. Then, with the approach of fall, his thoughts turn to the outdoors and the sport of waterfowling.

He will spare no expense in the purchase of equipment and will range his affairs so that he has ample time for the killing of ducks. If his favorite slough or pothole is not available for hunting, he will spare no cost for transportation to areas where waterfowl are plentiful. If this does not bring results, he will lease or acquire by other means those areas in which he may pursue his favorite sport.

The purchase of a state hunting license, duck stamp, shells, waders, boats, decoys, gasoline and room and board while on these duckhunting trips might create a financial problem for him. But he always manages to arrange his budget so that he may be in a position to "harvest a surplus."

To him, duck hunting is outdoor recreation at its best. He and millions of other Americans look forward each fall to the opening of the duck season. Never does he question whether or not there is an ample supply, but asks, "What is the limit and how can I get my share?"

Conservationists interested in the perpetuation of waterfowl have long recognized this problem and were generally agreed that if the limit on ducks were cut drastically and dramatically, the duck hunter would organize, become alarmed and protest about diminishing supplies. The season of 1961 completely refuted this theory. With the bag limit cut severely in all of the flyways in 1961, the American duck hunter accepted the regulations philosophically. He reasoned that the supply was down, that harvest must be controlled, so he laid his gun aside for the season. "Next year it was bound to be better."

Guardians of our waterfowl flocks had hoped that Mr. Duck Hunter would organize and cry out for action to save his favorite sport. Figures will indicate that the sale of duck stamps dropped considerably in 1961. Why? Because, reasoned the duck hunter, why purchase a stamp for something he couldn't hunt in quantity.

If duck hunters through the years had been concerned about diminishing supplies of ducks and had then used a small portion of their time, money and effort usually spent for duck hunting to combat this situation causing the decline, then waterfowl would not be in its present desperate situation.

Congress To Blame

If Mr. Duck Hunter and Mr. Taxpayer had only analyzed the situation through the years, they would have realized that practically every step resulting in the plummeting duck numbers had been instituted by the Congress of the United States.

The basic reason, of course, for diminishing waterfowl populations is the lack of proper habitat. The Agriculture Department, with the aid of subsidized drainage, and the Corps of Engineers, with its recurrent refusal to acknowledge wildlife values, are the prime offenders in the destruction of this natural resource.

But if the situation is honestly and fairly evaluated, these two government agencies probably cannot be blamed too much. They were subscribing to the "will of the People", as it is called in a democracy. All of the funds for these governmental agencies were obtained by a vote of the Congress of the United States. The Congress represents the people and the legislators respond to the will of the people.

In spite of the fact that the drainage subsidy as administered by the Agriculture Department was depleting a natural resource, members of Congress felt safe and secure in voting funds for this subsidy through the years, because the people requested the subsidy. The record will demonstrate that the numbers receiving a government subsidy for draining the water off the land and destroying an irreplaceable resource were few indeed compared to the vast number of duck hunters in the United States.

Apathetic Duck Hunter

But the people who wanted the subsidy spoke loud and clear to their representatives in Washington while Mr. Duck Hunter sat idly by

(Continued on page 67)



George Tovey Photo.

the loss of prime wetlands such as this is hurting our waterfowl production.

WHY TO BLAME?—

(Continued from page 66)

...ed that "there will always be enough hunting left for me." If two states alone, the Dakotas, prime wetlands totalling 135,000 were lost with the aid of the drainage subsidy in a short 15 years. These acres, at a price of \$30 an acre, represent an actual cash value of \$4,050,000. These figures are not particularly alarming unless they are analyzed.

The Soil Conservation Service estimates that there were, at one time, 127 million acres of wetlands in the United States. By 1956, due to drainage, only 74 million acres remained and, of these, only 22½ million acres were of significant value to waterfowl.

The Fish and Wildlife Service has estimated that a minimum of 12½ million acres of U. S. wetlands are needed to maintain waterfowl populations at a significant level. Of this total, some 5 million acres are already under state or federal control, thus leaving about 7 million acres to be acquired. Recognizing the need for the acquisition of these valuable wetlands, Congress has instituted a crash program and we now have one governmental agency, the Fish and Wildlife Service, buying and leasing wetlands. At the same time, the Agriculture Department continues to foster, support and finance the drainage of our remaining wetlands.

Duck Hunter Pays

This situation is completely unfair to the duck hunter and to the taxpayer. All monies furnished by the Agriculture Department for drainage subsidies have been provided by the taxpayer. All funds for acquiring wetlands by the Fish and Wildlife Service are furnished by the duck hunter in his purchase of duck stamps. Not one cent of the program's funds comes from the taxpayer.

The American duck hunter allowed this condition to develop and by his lack of interest and his apathy to the whole general structure of the waterfowl situation.

During the 1961 hunting season, duck hunters generally questioned the regulation permitting the shooting of only two ducks in the Central Flyway because, on the big refuges, tremendous concentrations of mallard ducks were observed. A student of this problem would recognize that, because of drouth and loss of habitat, these were the only places for waterfowl to rest.

How desperate was the situation, really, in 1961?

To maintain an adequate supply of ducks, 2.1 young must be produced each year for every adult bird and the block. North Dakota samples taken and analyzed for the 1961 season show that approximately four old mallards were killed for every young bird. Nebraska wing samples of all duck species taken last fall show more than two old taken for every young bird killed. No one needs to be a great student of waterfowl populations to realize that this situation could be disastrous in even one more year.

Canada Is Not Answer

There are those uninformed persons who feel that if all habitat for waterfowl is destroyed in the duck producing areas of the United States, the ducks would simply move north and find new homes in the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions. But these people fail to realize that the conditions existing in North and South Dakota also exist in Canada. It is also rapidly exploiting the land in the Prairie Provinces of Canada, and if the essential marshes in that area disappear, so will

DEER DOPE—1962

Ten Thousand Deer Permits!

Eldie W. Mustard
Game Biologist

As many of you have undoubtedly heard, there will be 10,000 deer permits issued for the 1962 Iowa gun season for deer. We have the deer, and the State Conservation Commission, in keeping with its policy of full utilization of our renewable natural resources, determined that as many Iowa hunters as possible should be allowed to hunt big game in their home state so long as an adequate number of deer are left to perpetuate the species.

Biologists have learned a long time ago that you can't stockpile game and should remove the annual surplus each year for maximum returns. Game species can't be "banked" for later use and if we tried it, all we'd end up with would be a deficit in the number of Iowa sportsmen permitted to attempt to bag a wiley whitetail.

Gun permits will be issued on the basis of a statistically controlled drawing with all applicants having an equal opportunity of success whether you live in Des Moines or Doon. The new issuing technique also makes allowance for parties up to five, with either all members of a party getting a permit or none getting one. Applicants must decide, however, whether they wish to apply in a party or as an individual—any person who applies both in a party and as an individual will disqualify himself and his party.

In addition to the change in the method of issuing permits to gun hunters, the bowhunting season

was increased in length from 48 days in 1961 to a 51-day season in 1962. Bowhunters will be allowed to pit their hunting prowess on deer from October 13 to December 2.

1962 Population Estimates

The 1962 Winter Deer Census revealed that Iowa's deer herd is at an all-time high, with a winter population of 15,938 reported. This population estimate indicates about 12.6 per cent increase in the Iowa deer herd over 1961 and is a 33 per cent increase over the average population for the preceding five years.

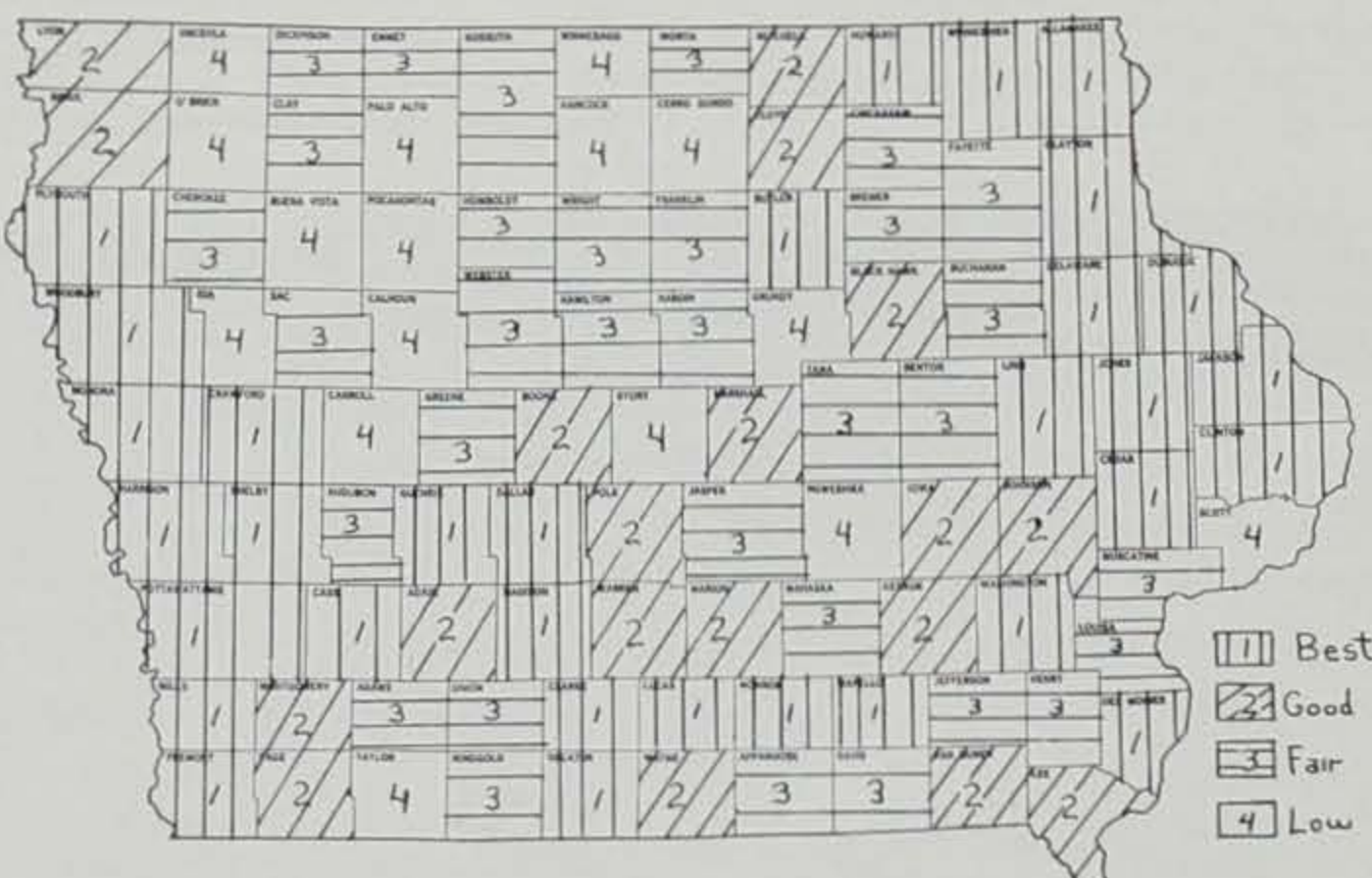
This alone should convince our sportsmen that the deer management program has been sound, for even though 30,800 deer have been legally harvested during the nine open seasons, the herd continues to prosper and provide a sustained annual yield as well as important recreation.

Our Iowa deer are blessed with an excellent reproductive potential and there is an annual rate of reproduction of about 70 fawns for each 100 adult deer. This is tremendous reproduction, probably among the best in the nation. Iowa hunters should have over 27,000 whitetails on hand this fall to test their skill as deer hunters. This is the greatest fall deer population since the open deer seasons were begun in 1953.

Commission personnel, as well as some interested citizens, were concerned with the welfare of the deer during the past extremely tough winter.

Checks made on the condition of deer examined during the December gun season showed that

(Continued on page 72)



1962 Deer Distribution.

the ducks.

For one who has studied the habits of waterfowl and Man's destruction of the habitat through the years, these problems at times appear impossible to solve. It can be demonstrated, however, that Man can more intensively use the land and still maintain abundant wildlife populations if sound management and judgment are used. This can be done for waterfowl if Mr. Duck Hunter and Mr. Taxpayer will recognize that we need not bring marginal cropland into production, that our food and fiber supplies are adequate, and then loudly and clearly demonstrate to their legislators that programs developed to exploit the land to the detriment of wildlife do not represent the wishes of the average American citizen.—Reprinted from *South Dakota Conservation Digest*.

DO-IT-YOURSELF GAME CALLS

Easy to Make . . . Fun to Use

Jack Kirstein

In the dim light of early dawn, the black shapes of the birds pass high and far out of range of your favorite load of number two shot. You fumble for the cord around your neck and lift the goose call to your lips.

The highball call breaks the morning silence once, and then again. In a few seconds you hear an answering call as several lone birds break from the flight. Cautiously you cup your hand over the call and begin talking them over your blind.

As they swing over your pond or marsh you sit breathlessly waiting. Then they spot the decoys and break off to swoop lower and finally flare to come in.

Without the game call, this bit of wood and reed in your hand, these birds would have been miles away by now.

To many hunters, the second most important piece of equipment on their list of hunting gear is the call. Many endless hours and countless dollars are spent each year getting the game call on the counter at your favorite sporting goods store.

But what of the early days of the sport? What did grandfather use to lure game within range of his antique "shootin' iron"? and what can the present-day hunter use when he has lost his game call and is miles from a sport shop?

Discounting the many sportsmen who can competently call game by voice or with the aid of blowing on the back of the hand,

many more have used home-made calls with success.

Would you like to try it? Here are a few examples, and no doubt you can find others by asking friends and old-timers.

If you should lose or break a reed while in camp, try your hand at fashioning one out of the back of a hard rubber comb. Break off the teeth and shape this new reed with a knife or file. Sanding or filing will thin it to the proper dimension. A little trial and error and you may be included in the league of those who still claim this to be a better reed than the commercial ones available.

A predator or deer call can be made with the help of a common wooden clothespin of the forked variety, and several rubber bands.

The clothespin is split apart by pulling on the forked ends, and carefully shaped with a knife to leave a concave opening the length of the pin on the inside when the halves are placed together. A heavy rubber band of a size you can determine by trial and error is stretched inside the cavity and other rubber bands wrapped at the outside ends hold the call together. A little practice on blowing through this elastic reed may prove profitable in the field, and you can have the satisfaction of making it.

When in need of a duck call that favorably approaches the quality of commercial calls, you might try your hand at this novel innovation. Secure a fruit jar lid,

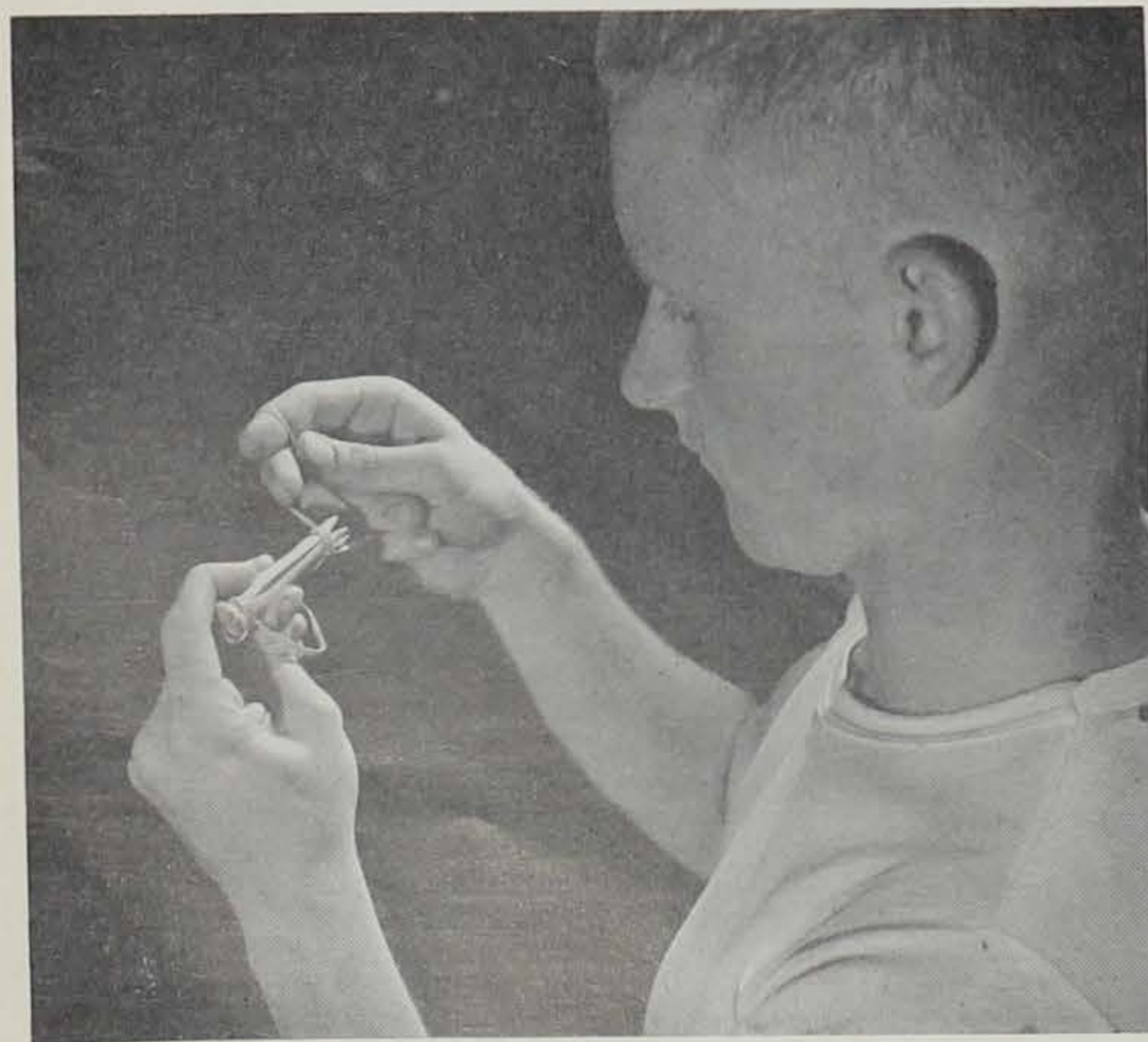


The clothespin call is easy to make and use in the field.

preferably of the old zinc type, and remove the rubber gasket and glass liner. Hold the lid top down in the palm of your hand. Then with the use of a long threaded bolt or screw, rasp the edge of the jar lid with a quick motion. This, if done properly, will give you a short quick quacking call. Moving the threaded side of the bolt or screw slowly back and forth over the edge of the lid

will make the chuckling sounds. Try various types of jar lids and sized threads on the bolt or screws to make different tones with the call. Also experiment with inverting the jar lid in your hand.

You may not prefer these calls to your "old favorite honker buster" but in a pinch you might save some good shooting for yourself and your friends.



After the inside rubber band is in place, a band is wound around each end.



This call makes a surprisingly realistic duck call.

WHEN OLD BRONZE-BACK STRIKES . . .

the stream bursts as if a miniature bomb had exploded. Followed with savage rushes and aerial leaps, the smallmouth bass, one of the most prized game fish in Iowa, rewards the patient fisherman.

Carol Buckmann

The gamey fish isn't usually caught by the "put your line in the water and see what takes the bait" method. He requires more of an education. For real smallmouth success, one should know its habits, type of water he hides and feeds in and conditions causing him to change his habitat.

Smallmouth take artificials of all kinds but there are times when they will take only natural baits. They like clear water over sand, gravel or rock bottoms. In the cool fall weather or in 40 to 50 degree temperatures, bass will be in deeper pools and stillwaters where they take natural rather than artificial bait, especially crayfish.

Coldwater Fish

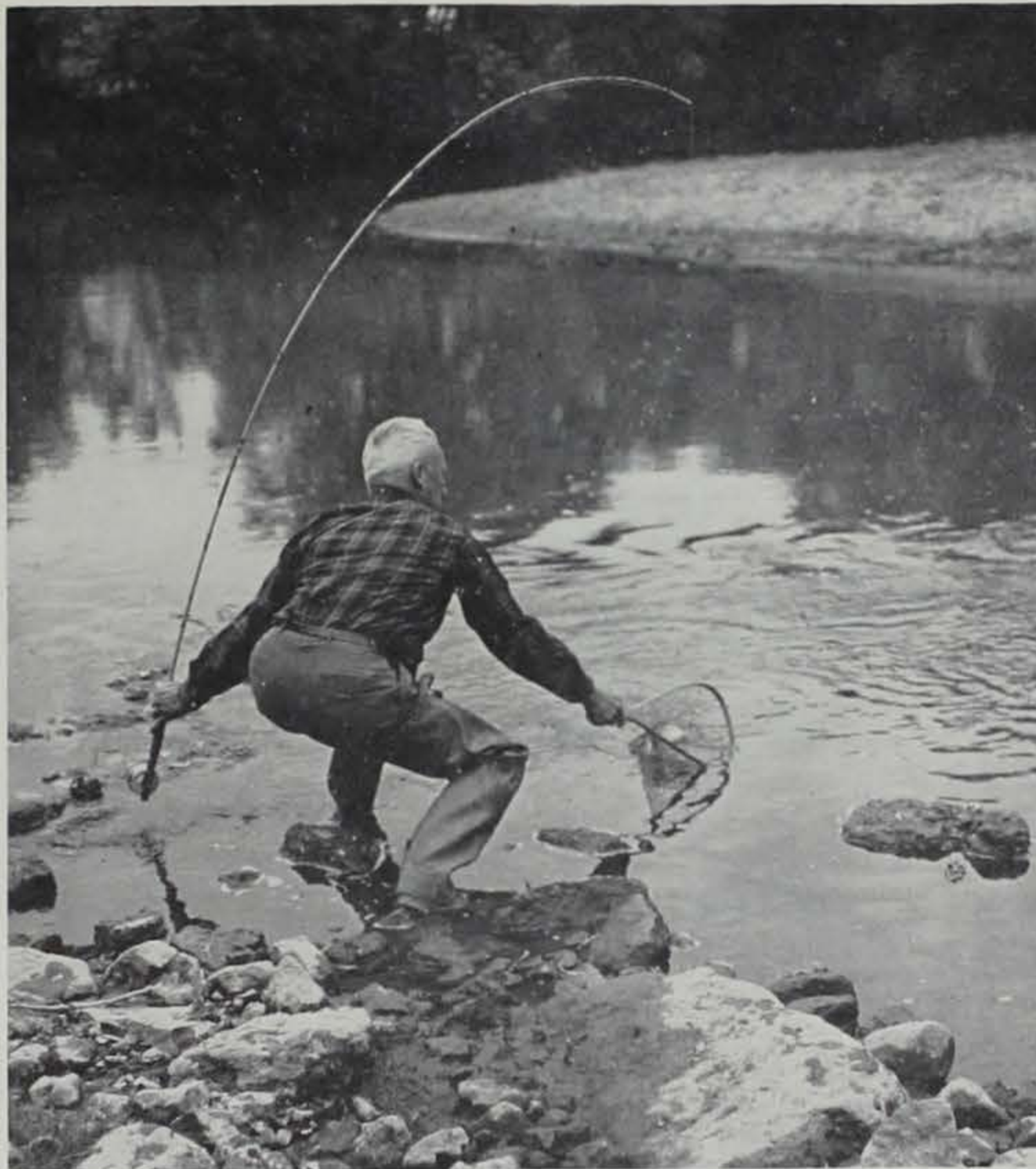
Smallmouth bass like warm water even less than largemouths. Between 40 and 50 degrees bass are lazy and all body processes including digestion are slower; but they will take lures, especially natural baits. They become more active as the weather warms the water to 48 degrees. They then rise to the surface to occasionally feed. At this time, live bait drifted and still fished is the best fishing method.

Live bait fishermen usually use a 4 to 5 foot casting rod, level-winch reel, 9 to 12 pound test line, gut leader and hooks from Number 4 to Number 2 in size. Crayfish, hellgramites and minnows are considered a tasty meal to a smallmouth.

Casting live bait over deep pools or deep under-cut banks and eddies by bait casting or spinning has proved successful. When still fishing for Mr. Smallmouth, cast the bait unto a likely place and retrieve it or permit the bait to drift downstream under brush piles, logs or rock riffles.

The second method, spinning outfits and light weight casting rods are popular to many anglers. Lures such as spinner minnows, and spinner flies, rudder-head flies and lures, metal spoons, and other small wooden and plastic plugs and small surface baits are used with this type of light weight equipment. Stream smallmouth become more active in degree to 60 degree temperatures and begin moving to more shallow water to feed. At this time they respond to artificial baits by all three methods more frequently.

They gradually retire to deeper pools and eddies, deeper rock ledges, shaded, deep, under-cut



Jim Sherman Photo.

Northeast Iowa has some of the middlewest's finest smallmouth streams.

banks as the water temperature rises above 70 degrees. In high water stages, they usually stay in deep pools. In wet cycles, they stay in small streams after spawning and often do not move to the larger streams.

The third method, fly casting, is the most time-honored method of bass fishing. Although experimentation is the best guide as to bait to use, there are some points. Most fly casting lures fit into categories such as dry flies, wet flies, hair and feather streamers, spinner-fly combinations, spoons, small plugs and various floating and popping bugs including hair frogs, hoppers, cork and hair-bodied bugs. In general, wet flies, streamers, bucktails and nymphs have proved successful although bait is purely a personal preference matter.

Once again, experimentation is the best measuring stick but spinner-fly combinations are successful early in the season. Try surface lures and poppers in hot weather, dry flies when there's a hatch of natural insects on the water. When the water is not too turbid, streamers and wet flies are good at all times of the year.

Technique

Fishing upstream is less apt to disturb the smallmouth than if he's approached from the rear. So fish on the downstream side of a large rock, log or other obstruction. Cast your fly or lure so that it lands well above the point where you expect the fish to be, and

maneuver it so it will drift close to the suspected hiding place.

In boat fishing the smallmouth in streams, it is also necessary to fish downstream in most cases. Casting is usually done down and across the stream. Don't pass up the holes immediately below rock riffles, snags in the stream, brush piles or rocky shore line.

Dry flies should be allowed to drift with the current but keep the line taut so you can set the hook fast at the slightest indication of a strike. Wet and streamer flies represent the immature stages of insects, or minnows in the case of streamers. These should be retrieved with short, jerky motions.

This wary fish is sensitive of movement, so wear drab-colored clothes and guard against your shadow casting across the stream ahead of you. They are also sensitive to shock and vibrations in the water and for this reason, in the stream or on the bank, walk with care, avoiding unnecessary noises, crushing undercover, gravel or loose rocks. Water temperature controls the hatch of aquatic insects and determines if bass will be in riffles, pools, in eddies or along rock ledges.

Where to Fish

There is a good population in the major streams but tributaries produce most of the feeding since they clear faster after a high water stage and fishing conditions here are suitable during the greater part of the year.

The Turkey River from the

NEW CONSERVATION SOURCE BOOK

A publication of a type long needed by those interested in conservation and conservation education has recently been published by Iowa State University Press. The "Conservation Source Book" was developed by the Iowa Conservation Education Council to supply basic information on the conservation and use of our natural resources. Information concerning soils, water, plant life, animal life, minerals, rocks, fossils and natural areas is provided in separate sections under these headings.

Equally important as the informative material in the individual chapters is an extensive list of agencies where supplementary information may be obtained.

The "Conservation Source Book" was compiled by geologists, soil scientists, botanists, and others who in addition to being well versed in their fields have extensive teaching and research experience. The Council had achieved its goal in producing a "Source Book" of basic information concerning conservation and an extensive listing of available supplementary information of interest to teachers and others.

"The Conservation Source Book" is available from Iowa State University Press, Ames, Iowa, at \$1.95.

Cresco vicinity to Elkader, all the Upper Iowa River, the main stem of the Yellow River between Postville and Waukon on State Highway 51, the Wapsipinnicon River from Littleton to Oxford Junction, and the Cedar River from the state line to Palo above Cedar Rapids are all that remain of a once wide expanse of smallmouth waters.

In the Turkey River system, Crane Creek from Lawler to its junction with the Little Turkey River, the Volga River from Fayette to the junction of the Turkey River at Elkport, and the Little Turkey River from the town of Little Turkey to its junction with the Turkey River at Eldorado in northeast Iowa are waters to remember. The Des Moines River as far south as the Ledges, the Iowa River from Alden to Eldora, Little Sioux River and Rock River, and the Maquoketa River are also smallmouth haunts. In the Maquoketa River, try these tributaries: Prairie Creek west of Manchester and Lamont Creek near Lamont in Delaware County.

Other smallmouth tributaries include Lime and Bear Creeks near Brandon flowing into the Cedar River, Buffalo Creek from Winthrop to its junction with the Wapsi River and Silver Creek in Jones County near Monticello.

The main thing to remember is, if you know where they are, you can catch one anytime. And anytime, landing the tricky smallmouth is a real thrill!

HOW GAME SEASONS ARE SET IN IOWA

Eddie W. Mustard
Game Biologist

"How are game seasons set?" "What do they think they are doing?" "Now my idea..." These are just a few of the comments a Game Manager may hear daily from interested sportsmen. It is almost a fact that everyone, or nearly everyone, who hunts is also an amateur game manager who would like to know all of the answers about game management. In order to help you out during your coffee-hour bull sessions, we'd like to tell you how we go about setting game seasons in Iowa.

First of all there are no crystal balls used, no ouiji sessions held, and no tea leaves read to determine what our game seasons should be. Seasons are set only after serious consideration has been given all of the biological data available for each species, as well as consideration of certain aspects of law enforcement and public relations.

One other question is apparent. "Why do we have game seasons?" Originally, at the turn of the century, the main purpose of game seasons was to divide up the remaining wildlife among the people, with the idea that our wildlife was doomed to extinction anyway. The birth of modern game management, a rather recent event, has changed this. Because of sound game management and research, many formerly disappearing game species are increasing, while introduced species have taken the place of some game animals which disappeared because changes in their habitat made it impossible for them to survive.

Basically, game seasons are set to perpetuate the species, remove the annual surplus, and to provide outdoor recreation to our sportsmen on a sustained basis. We have

learned that you can't stockpile most game for later use and that wildlife should be regarded as a crop which is either harvested annually by man for his use or is removed by nature. Modern game management attempts to circumvent the situation where our hunters either have a feast or famine type of hunting.

The Biology Section of the State Conservation Commission is assigned the major responsibility for setting up surveys and research programs designed to obtain the basic biological facts needed to make sound game season recommendations. Each Game Biologist has one or more of our primary game species assigned to him and it is his responsibility to determine what facts are needed and how they may best be obtained. It goes without saying that he is very capably assisted by our Conservation Officers and Unit Game Managers in carrying out this task, for one man couldn't possibly cover the whole state of Iowa.

Certain basic facts are needed in setting game seasons for all animals. These facts include such things as population trends, reproduction, kill or harvest data, hunter distribution, and physical condition of the breeding stock. The means of obtaining this information are many and varied for the various forms of wildlife, but such data are necessary if good game seasons are to be recommended. Using deer for an example, let's examine the steps used in determining the season.

Collection of Basic Biological Data

1. **Population trend surveys**—Each year Conservation Officers estimate the number of deer in their territories. In addition to this, aerial trend flights have been initiated. The primary use of these data are to determine whether, on a regional and state



Using jawbones mounted on the board, field men can collect age data for the biologist.

level, the deer population is up, down, or stable.

2. **Reproduction data**—Trained Commission personnel check deer and classify them, based on tooth replacement and wear, into various age groups during the gun season. These data enable us to determine the reproductive rate for a particular year. By grouping the data, it has been determined that Iowa deer reproduce at the rate of about 70 fawns per each 100 adults. We are fortunate to have this extremely high rate of reproduction in the Iowa Deer Herd.

3. **Age ratios in the kill**—This is derived from the same source as is the reproduction data. From this information we can determine the effect of the hunting season on our deer population, that is, whether deer were over-harvested, underharvested, or about correctly harvested.

4. **Number harvested**—This is one measure of the success of our management program. To obtain this, each hunter is required to submit a brief report on his hunting success and other information. Additional data are also obtained from the Conservation Officers regarding the number of farmers without permits that kill deer. This information enables us to keep track of the year by year kill and to determine whether or not the kill in a specific area is too great.

5. **Hunter distribution**—This is also obtained from card returns submitted by licensed hunters. Using this information, we can de-

termine whether or not hunters are concentrating too heavily on some areas and not heavily enough on others. If hunters are not distributing themselves properly, some means, for instance permits given only in certain areas, could be implemented to correct the situation.

6. **Kills by decimating age other than legal hunting**—Conservation Officers submit a report each deer they have knowledge of that is killed by traffic, deer poaching, or other causes. This general trend of the deer kill outside of hunting has in the past been closely correlated with our population estimates. It also yields information on what is happening to a relatively large number of deer—in 1961 a total of 832 known deer were accounted for by decimating agents, which was more than twice the number killed by bowhunters that year!

7. **Physical condition of game**—When deer are checked during deer season the general physical condition is noted for each animal and measurements, such as weights, points per antler, beam diameter of the antler, which are criteria of physical condition, are taken. If condition warrants, such as the severe winter we just weathered special surveys are implemented to determine current physical condition of deer.

Analysis and Interpretation Basic Data

Much of the time of each biologist is spent in the analysis and interpretation of the data.

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Age in quail can be determined by the color of the tippets of the coverts.

Jim Sherman Photo.

THE SEASON SET—

(Continued from page 70)

is spent analyzing and interpreting the biological data pertaining to the species for which they are responsible. These men are trained in game research and management and use this training, as well as their experience and the experience of others, in interpreting the collected data so that game laws which allow for the greatest recreational use of our game supply, while maintaining adequate breeding stock to perpetuate the species, can be recommended.

Biological Recommendations

After the facts have been gathered, analyzed, and interpreted in the light of current conditions, the next step is the preparation of the biological recommendations for the proposed game season. This is the most important single report submitted by the Biologist, for it is in reality the culmination of his year's work upon it his reputation as a Game Biologist rests. After completion, the recommendations are submitted to the Superintendent of the Game Section for his critical examination and comment.

Fish and Game Division

Conference

Before submitting the season recommendations to the Conservation Commission for action, a conference concerning the recommendations is held with representatives of the various sections of the Division of Fish and Game. Here the recommendations are explained, as are the supporting facts. This group may alter a recommendation if they so desire. At this meeting emerge the season recommendations formulated by the game management personnel of the Fish and Game Division.

Commission Action

The season recommendations are presented to the seven-man Conservation Commission for their consideration. They may call on various personnel to answer questions on certain phases of the recommendations and may alter them if they deem it feasible to do so. Following their approval, the Conservation Commission instructs the Director of the State Game Commission to issue an administrative order giving the regulations which shall govern the game season for the coming year.

Public Notification

A major substance of the administrative orders setting seasons are then made public via the various media of radio, press, TV, and the IOWA CONSERVATIONIST. The system of setting game seasons is essentially one with checks and balances which prevent poor recommendations based on personal bias or other factors from ever becoming regulations governing a game season. These recommendations are the end result of team work and begin with our professional personnel and ends with our

"HOW MUCH WOOD WOULD A WOODCHUCK . . ."

Carol Buckmann

Mother woodchuck peered cautiously from the opening of her burrow, sniffed the air for any possible sign of danger and disappeared inside.

A moment later, still cautious, she waddled out, followed by her brood of five. Their short legs moving rapidly, like little puppies, they shuffled behind her. Their eyes were opened for the first time to the wonders of the new panorama of the outside world.

Born about a month before, they were pathetically clumsy, not sure of their movements. Always alert for the bark of a dog, the mother nibbled the grass and her cubs imitated her. For the moment satiated, they rolled in the soft grass of the meadow, their round heavy bodies resembling balls of fur.

But if a dog should bark, Mother woodchuck or groundhog would take her curious and bewildered kindergarten in tow and scamper for the burrow. By August or September these young chucks will leave their home burrow to set up housekeeping on their own.

Dogs are the mortal enemies of the much persecuted woodchucks but man also finds sport in hunting and killing this underdog of the meadow. Farmers often consider them a nuisance and, because of the woodchuck's fondness of garden delicacies, destroys them whenever possible. Many people believe they dig up potatoes, and their love for melons, peas, beans, lettuce and peaches find them unpopular with gardeners.

Many formidable enemies, such as wolves, wildcats and foxes made chucks their prey in early days. But now, man and his dog remain to encroach upon a woodchuck's domain. Being grounded isn't always a groundhog's nature as often they ascend trees for protection from enemies or a meal of apples, cherries or other fruits.

By nature he's a shy animal and, being naturally inclined toward home life, he seldom strays far from the burrow although he occasionally goes on long forage expeditions. He feeds in the morning and evening, saving the greater part of the day for napping.

A lover of meadows, pastures and clearings in woods where grass or beds of clover are found, the burrow is often found near a fence, bank or stone pile affording easy access to its chosen food.

At the slightest sign of danger, it sits on hind legs, blunt nose

pointed in the direction of the enemy and small ears cocked for the slightest sound. (By muscular contraction, these little, acute ears are closed to keep out soil when digging.)



pointed in the direction of the enemy and small ears cocked for the slightest sound. (By muscular contraction, these little, acute ears are closed to keep out soil when digging.)

In this motionless pose, the animal resembles part of the landscape and is difficult to distinguish from the grassy background. The short tail with its brush effect, together with the hind legs, serves as a tripod for supporting him in this erect position.

If danger is real, he scampers quickly into the burrow. If cornered, however, the woodchuck is a fierce, courageous antagonist and a match for any dog even much larger than himself.

Chase a chuck and he seeks the sanctuary of his burrow where he commences to dig a barrier to keep out the enemy by digging and throwing earth behind him. If you're husky and an engineer, you might be able to dig him out. For his burrow is from ten to twenty feet long, with the nesting chamber at the extreme end, lined with soft grass and leaves which they carry in with their mouths. The burrow dips down a little ways, then rises at an easy angle so that the inmate is not easily flooded out.

Sometimes he constructs several openings to provide alternate means of entry and exit to his domicile, making easy escape from enemies. These back doors are usually concealed and not surrounded by heaped earth such as his front door.

Other than being known as groundhogs, woodchucks are called rockchuck, marmot and, to the French Canadians, siffleur. This

short-legged and heavy-bodied animal is related to the ground squirrel and is common throughout North America. Its grizzly coat is red or gray-brown and the under parts are brownish chestnut. The head is usually dark brown, the feet brown or almost black. Both pairs of feet are excellent diggers, the front for loosening the soil, the hind for kicking it out of the burrow.

Fully grown, they reach a length of around two feet, the male outgrowing the female by approximately two inches.

In August and September, the woodchuck lives up to its nickname, "groundhog," and makes a hog of himself gorging on the fruit of the land, preparing himself for winter. Around the first of October, the little butterball retires to his burrow and takes a long winter snooze. At this state of torpor, his heartbeat is scarcely detectable and nourishment comes from his stored body fat. With his temperature lowered and respiration weak, he lives in this suspended animation state until March or April.

But according to legend he comes out before his time is up to make news on Ground Hog Day. Around February 2, he supposedly comes out to live up to his reputation of being a famous weather predictor. Reporters scurry to zoos and parks to watch him crawl out of his hole to inspect his shadow. If the sun is shining and he sees his shadow, back to sleep he goes for another six weeks, as the story goes. For a warm February is believed by weather prophets to mean a late and chilly spring.

DEER DOPE—1962—

(Continued from page 67)

the deer went into the winter in tip-top condition and had laid down heavy fat deposits. Wildlife researchers have indicated that 10-20 per cent losses in weight during the winter are normal and can be expected. Our deer, because of their excellent food supply, both in quality and quantity, can survive hard winters such as we just experienced because they are able to lay down body fat deposits on which they draw for the reserve energy necessary to face the rigors of winter.

A further check was made on deer condition in the early spring, at a time when the evidence of malnutrition, if it is present, is most apparent. Conservation officers were asked to check the physical condition of all deer with which they came in contact, primarily car-killed deer. The results of this survey indicated the deer had generally come through the winter in good shape.

The officers were also to notify the biologists on the deer project in event deer were found for which they could not definitely ascertain the cause of death. It was planned that the deer biologist would examine these deer critically to determine whether or not malnutrition was the primary cause of death. No deer were found, however, for which the officers could not determine the cause of death.

Field observations on live deer indicated that deer were bright and alert, as healthy deer should be. In no instance were deer observed which were dull and listless, which are signs of malnutrition.

Based on our work last winter, we are confident the deer came through in fine shape.

Prospects for the 1962 Season

The 1962 deer season should be another record year if the weather during the 3-day gun season will cooperate. There is a good deer population, reproduction is typically high, more hunters will be out to keep the deer moving, and the season is long enough to offer some relaxed hunting; these factors, in my opinion, offer the ingredients for a successful deer season.

The deer distribution map included with this article is intended to be used only as a guide to our hunters. The best place to hunt is undoubtedly in an area with which you are familiar and where you have had a chance to scout around looking for deer signs. Don't pass up your home county in looking for the area you will hunt because you might be pleasantly surprised at what you can find, almost literally, in your own backyard.

Above all, during your hunting activities, conduct yourselves as good sportsmen who have been given the privilege of hunting Iowa's most magnificent game species—the whitetailed deer.

I AM A TREE FARMER

Pearl S. Buck

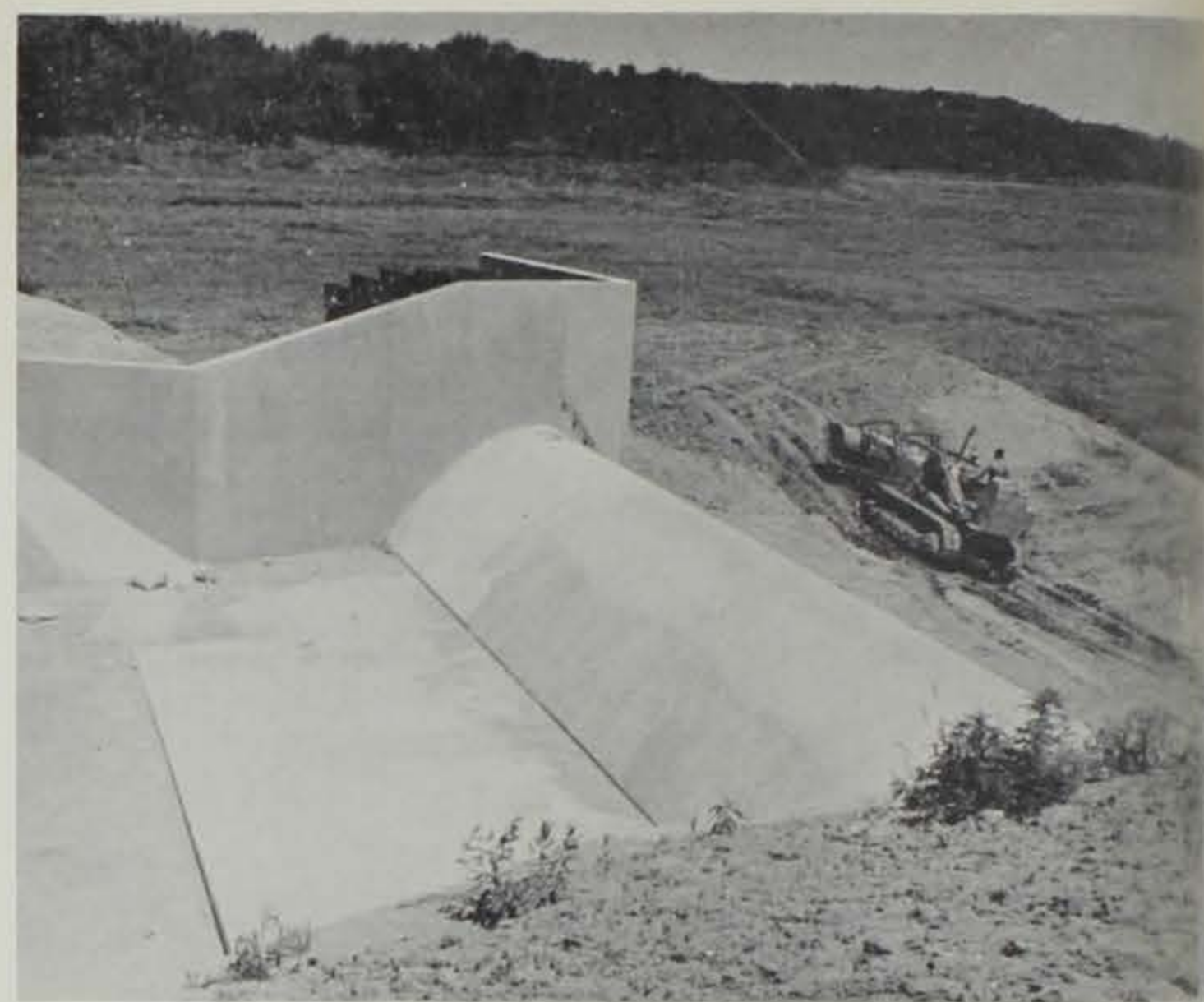
Why am I a tree farmer? I suppose the first answer lies far back in my childhood memories of China. The mountains which surrounded our home were high and beautiful but they were bare. I never saw a wooded mountainside until I came to live in my own country. I loved those bare mountains, for beauty's sake. Their bony outlines were handsome against the blue sky on a clear day or when they were wreathed in fog and storm in the rainy season. Yet I knew that their beauty was dangerous. The rain rushed down those steep treeless cliffs and flooded the countryside and ruined the crops. If floods were too severe, the people starved and we had a famine. Trees, I learned, were essential to a steady economy. They conserved precious water.

Then, too, there was the matter of fuel. In China people were always short of fuel, and part of the farm family's daily work was the search for fuel, and this at all times of the year. The fuel harvest proper was in the autumn, after the rice harvest. Rice straw was too precious to burn, and it must be kept for food and bedding for the ox or water buffalo who pulled the plow. Land was too scarce to grow hay. Since there were no forests, the wild grass on the hills and mountains and along the roadsides provided the chief source of fuel. Men, women and children went out in the autumn to cut the grass, bind it into great sheaves and carry it to the city to sell for cash, saving barely enough for home use.

None of it was used for heating the farmhouse. Handful by handful the grass was fed into the brick stove in the kitchen, wherein were set two big cauldrons of sheet iron, one for hot water, the other for rice. A third smaller cauldron was for vegetable and meat dishes. Whatever the food, it was cooked quickly, to save fuel, rice steamed, meat sliced thin and vegetables kept crisp.

No wonder then that the forests of my own country seem miracles to me. On my tree farms in Vermont and Pennsylvania I walk through the woods on rainy days and revel in the water soaking slowly into the earth through a deep mulch of leaves and pine needles and moss. Trees conserve water and water is essential to our life, a fluid of priceless value.

And I never cease to treasure the luxury of log fires in my house. I am not burning up valuable trees. I burn the surplus, the fallen logs, the trees that are not fit for marketing. I have such an abundance of firewood that my evenings at home are bright with warmth and light and comfort. While I sit by the fire, I remember my Chinese neighbors and I wish



Jack Kirstein Photo

UPPER PINE GETS A LIFT

The bulldozer in the photo is smoothing the throat of the new weir that has been completed at Upper Pine Lake. In response to the heavy use of Pine Lake State Park, the Commission started work aimed at expanding the size of Upper Pine from 72 to 100 acres. The work began last fall, has been completed, and the lake is now being filled.

The project, which called for raising the dam six feet and rebuilding the wier, wing walls, and abutments six feet higher, cost a little over \$85,000.

Due to the extremely large watershed ratio for so small a lake (81:1 with 20:1 normal), Upper Pine will probably be filled completely later this fall. Two erosion control structures are being designed for this large watershed and will be installed at a later date.

Plans for the park include access roads, boat ramps (the lake will now be large enough to permit the use of motors), a new picnic area and a new camp area. If use of the larger lake demands it, there is a possibility for another boat concession. Future development at Upper Pine Lake will hinge on the next session of the legislature when plans for this and other areas are proposed in the capital improvement budget.

that I could share with them the benefits of trees. I hear that they are planting trees now on the bare flanks of the mountains. I hope it is so. Last year when I visited Korea, some of the mountains there were being planted to trees. Japan, of course, has long known the value of trees. There, when a tree is cut, another is planted.

Yes, I value my forests. They provide good timber for sale, and wood for my home fires. They conserve water. They make productive use of my marginal land. They shelter wild animals, deer and bear, pheasants and rabbits and many other beasts and birds. And they are places of beauty, where wild flowers surprise me at every season. I think of a spot where, each year, the blue gentians grow. I think of it in moments of sadness, or of loneliness, and my soul revives.

Why do I have a tree farm? Well, there are the reasons. *Reprinted from the American Tree Farmer and Forestry Digest.*

Probably half of all yearling buck deer have two points on each side of their antlers.

WHAT'S IN A NAME

Union Grove gets its name from the village site now partly covered by the lake. Union Grove was a thriving village which folded in the mid-1880's when the railroad came through that part of Tama County and missed the town. Settlers joined with those from another village, Badger Hill, about six miles north of Union Grove and founded the present town of Gladbrook. Union Grove is one of two natural groves in the northwest part of Tama County. The park offers boating, fishing, duck-nicking, swimming, refreshment and camping.

The glass snake isn't a snake at all, but a legless lizard.

When full grown the otter weighs from 10 to 25 pounds.

The mule deer is larger than whitetail deer.

Fifty-six of the approximately 200 species of ducks, geese and swans are found in the United States.